

From: Tavlarides, Mark <mtavlarides@bgrdc.com>

Sent: Friday, May 8, 2020 1:12 PM

To: Tavlarides, Mark <mtavlarides@bgrdc.com>

Subject: UPDATE: International Criticism of the Illegal "Elections" Organized by Armenia in the Occupied Territories of Azerbaijan

Good afternoon,

The run-off of the so-called "elections" in Azerbaijan's internationally recognized territory of Nagorno-Karabakh took place recently on April 14. Below you will find an updated catalogue of international criticism regarding these illegal elections. Both Georgia and the United Kingdom condemned the runoff and again expressed support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Please see below for the full list of statements from the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (France, Russia, United States), the European Union, NATO, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), GUAM, the Turkic Council, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, Ukraine, the Czech Republic, and Georgia.

I additionally wanted to bring to your attention an [article](#) from Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty that notes the runoff "was held on April 14 amid international criticism and safety concerns due to the coronavirus outbreak."

These statements send the message to Armenia that the acquisition of territories by force cannot be recognized as legitimate, the occupation of territories cannot be used to impose their international recognition or change their legal status, and Armenia should immediately engage in the negotiation process to resolve the long-lasting conflict.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

Mark Tavlarides

BGR Group

Note: BGR Government Affairs, LLC has filed registration statements under the Foreign Agents Registration Act with regard to its representation and dissemination of information on behalf of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Additional information is on file with the Foreign Agents Registration Unit of the Department of Justice in Washington, DC.

International Criticism of Illegal "Elections" Organized by the Republic of Armenia in the Occupied Territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan on March 31, 2020 and April 14, 2020

1. **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia:**

"The Georgian side does not recognize the so called independence of Nagorno Karabakh and therefore does not recognize the 2nd round of the so called presidential elections held in this region of Azerbaijan. Georgia supports territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders and supports the peaceful settlement of conflict based on the principles and norms of international law."

2. **UK Embassy in Azerbaijan:**

"The UK does not recognise the Presidential 'elections' in Nagorno-Karabakh, the second round of which is taking place on 14 April. The UK again underlines its support for the OSCE Minsk Group and the Co-chairs' role in the peace process. We support the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Azerbaijan, while underlining the importance of universally recognised principles and norms of international law. We encourage #Azerbaijan and #Armenia to accelerate efforts to build confidence and achieve a peaceful resolution to the conflict. #ukinazerbaijan #NK #NagornoKarabakhUK"

3. **Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (France, Russia, and the United States):**

"The OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs (Igor Popov of the Russian Federation, Stéphane Visconti of France, and Andrew Schofer of the United States of America) have taken note of the so-called "general elections" in Nagorno-Karabakh, the first round of which took place on 31 March. In the context of a comprehensive settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the Co-Chairs recognize the role of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh in deciding its future in accordance with the principles and elements reiterated in the Co-Chairs' statement of 9 March 2019. The Co-Chairs note, however, that Nagorno-Karabakh is not recognized as an independent and sovereign state by any of the Co-Chair countries or any other country. Accordingly, the Co-Chairs do not accept the results of these "elections" as affecting the legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh and stress that the results in no way prejudice the final status of Nagorno-Karabakh or the outcome of the ongoing negotiations to bring a lasting and peaceful settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict."

4. **European Union (EU):**

"In view of the so-called 'presidential and parliamentary elections' in Nagorno-Karabakh on 31 March 2020, the European Union reiterates that it does not recognise the constitutional and legal framework within which they are being held. This event cannot prejudice the determination of the future status of Nagorno-Karabakh or the outcome of the ongoing negotiation process. The EU recalls its firm support to the OSCE Minsk Group and, in particular, to its Co-Chairs' efforts to bring about progress beyond the status quo and substantive negotiations towards comprehensive and

sustainable peace. The EU stands ready to further support efforts, aimed at early, peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.”

5. **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO):**

“With regard to the “general elections” that took place today in Nagorno-Karabakh, NATO does not accept the results of these “elections” as affecting the legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh and stress that the results in no way prejudice the final status of Nagorno-Karabakh or the outcome of the ongoing negotiations to bring a lasting and peaceful settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. NATO supports the OSCE Minsk Group, including the recent statement of the Co-Chairs on this issue <https://www.osce.org/minsk-group/449410>.”

6. **Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC):**

“The General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), view the holding of elections in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 31 March 2020 as in contravention to the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions concerning the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The OIC General Secretariat further referred to the resolutions and decisions of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe which supports a peaceful solution to the conflict on the basis of sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan.”

7. **Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM:**

#Nagorno-Karabakh region is #Azerbaijan. #ODED GUAM condemns the so-called elections held on 31 March 2020 in the occupied territories of #Azerbaijan by Armenia

8. **Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (Turkic Council):**

“The Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States condemns the so-called “presidential and parliamentary elections” in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan, which constitute a clear violation of the norms and principles of international law, including Helsinki Final Act of 1975, and the related UN Security Council Resolutions. Holding the so-called elections in the occupied territories undermines the efforts within the OSCE Minsk Process to find a peaceful settlement for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We call on the OSCE Minsk Group and the international community not to recognize these illegitimate elections. The Member States of the Turkic Council reaffirm their commitments to the norms and principles of international law and reiterate the importance of the early settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh

conflict, on the basis of sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan.”

9. **Ukraine:**

“The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine strongly condemns the so-called "presidential and parliamentary elections", held on March 31 in the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, the Republic of Azerbaijan. The results of these pseudo-elections have no legal consequences whereas they are contrary to the rules and principles of international law. Ukraine once again expresses its support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan in its internationally recognized borders and stands for peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.”

10. **United Kingdom:**

“The UK does not recognise the ‘elections’ which took place in Nagorno-Karabakh on 31 March. The UK reiterates its full support for the OSCE Minsk Group’s role in the peace process and encourages Azerbaijan and Armenia to accelerate efforts to build confidence and achieve a negotiated settlement.”

11. **Canada:**

“Canada supports the territorial integrity #Azerbaijan and doesn’t recognize the so-called “elections” held in Nagorno-Karabakh on 31/3. Such “elections” undermine efforts, incl by the OSCE #MinskGroup, to achieve a peaceful settlement of the NK conflict. #CanadaInAzerbaijan @CanadaOSCE.”

12. **Australia:**

“Australia supports the territorial integrity of #Azerbaijan and does not recognise the ‘elections’ which took place in Nagorno-Karabakh on 31 March. It is more important than ever the OSCE Minsk Group continues its role in the peace process to achieve a negotiated settlement.”

13. **Czech Republic:**

“On March 31, 2020, the so called „presidential and parliamentary elections” took place in the Nagorno-Karabakh. In this context, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic underlines that the Czech Republic does not recognize the constitutional and legal framework within which

these elections were being held. The Czech Republic fully supports the activity of the OSCE Minsk Group and its co-chairs and calls on all parties involved in the conflict for further peace processes, and supports the statement of UN Secretary-General of March 23, 2020, calling for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world."

14. **Georgia:**

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia reaffirms its support to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan and does not recognize the so-called presidential and parliamentary elections held on March 31, 2020 in N. Karabakh. Georgia supports exclusively peaceful settlement of N. Karabakh conflict in line with the norms and principles of international law."

Sources:

1. <https://mfa.gov.ge/News/saqartvelo-mkhars-uchers-azerbaijanis-respublikis.aspx?CatID=5&lang=en-US>
2. <https://www.facebook.com/121157634587563/posts/2886257018077597/>
3. <https://www.osce.org/minsk-group/449410>
4. https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/76801/nagorno-karabakh-statement-spokesperson-so-called-presidential-and-parliamentary-elections_en
5. NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs <https://www.facebook.com/187804647946026/posts/2895267910533006/?d=n>
6. https://www.oic-oci.org/topic/?t_id=23303&t_ref=13971&lan=en
7. <https://twitter.com/GUAMSecretariat/status/1244924344326914048>
8. https://www.turkkon.org/en/haberler/statement-by-the-cooperation-council-of-turkic-speaking-states_1986
9. <https://mfa.gov.ua/en/news/statement-ministry-foreign-affairs-ukraine-non-recognition-so-called-presidential-and-parliamentary-elections-nagorno-karabakh-azerbaijan-march-31>
10. British Embassy in Azerbaijan <https://www.facebook.com/121157634587563/posts/2857896530913646/?d=n>
11. <https://twitter.com/CanEmbTurkey/status/1245350594174488577>
12. <https://twitter.com/ausambturkey/status/1246007124431212549?s=21>
13. https://www.mzv.cz/jnp/en/issues_and_press/mfa_statements/x2020_04_01_statement_of_the_mfa_on_presidential_and.html
14. [https://mfa.gov.ge/News/saqareo-saqmeta-saministros-ganckhadeba-\(32\).aspx?CatID=5](https://mfa.gov.ge/News/saqareo-saqmeta-saministros-ganckhadeba-(32).aspx?CatID=5)

From: Tavlarides, Mark <mtavlarides@bgrdc.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 4:49 PM
To: Tavlarides, Mark <mtavlarides@bgrdc.com>
Subject: Armenia's Military Cooperation with Russia

Good afternoon,

I thought you might be interested in a few sources regarding **Armenia's military cooperation with Russia**. The Russian Consulate in Gyumri, Armenia has a webpage [cataloguing](#) the history of the 102nd Order of Alexander Nevsky Military Base and its contributions to strengthening and developing military cooperation with Armenia through its active participation in the ongoing joint activities of the Russian and Armenian armed forces. The stated combat mission of the 102nd Order of Alexander Nevsky Military Base is to protect the southern borders of the Fatherland in cooperation with the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia.

In just October of last year, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu visited Gyumri and inspected the base, saying its potential would be increased. TASS reported that the head of the military department [said](#), "The Russian 102nd military base, which is deployed in Armenia, is being modernized in terms of armaments and is expanding material and technical support." The Russian military base is deployed in Armenia in accordance with a 1995 agreement, which was later amended in the twenty-first century to extend the base's operation until 2044. The base's personnel is around 4,000 people.

Around the time of Russian Defense Minister Shoigu's October visit, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Air Force on the issues of the United Air Defense System of the CIS member states Lieutenant General Aitech Bizhev [noted](#) the air defense of Armenia and the Russian military base in Gyumri, as well as the fighter-air defense group of the Russian Federation, are synchronized into one system and work from a single command center. Additionally, a military parade back in 2016 also [revealed](#) Armenia is in possession of the Russian-made advanced 9K720 Iskander Short-Range Ballistic Missile System (SRBMS). An [article](#) in The National Interest noted this missile system has been the focus of disputes between Western and Russian political actors and experts, adding, "Such equipment often serves as a political instrument in Moscow's hands, putting pressure on NATO in pursuit of derailing the alliance's deterrent posture vis-à-vis Russia's consistent defiance."

Resources:

- *Pictures of Russian Units in Armenia:*
<https://yandex.ru/images/search?text=Российские%20войска%20в%20Гюмри%202020&stype=image&lr=103495&source=wiz>

- *Consulate General of Russia in Gyumri, Republic of Armenia*: 102nd Russian Military Base - https://gyumri.mid.ru/ru/sootechnestvenniki/102_aya_rossiyskaya_voennaya_baza/
- *Echo of the Caucasus*: The Armenian Ministry of Defense stated that the military base of the Russian Federation in Gyumri is strengthening in all directions - <https://www.ekhokavkaza.com/a/30252515.html>
- *RU Economics*: Strengthening Russian air base in Gyumri will make sense of Georgia's dream of joining NATO - <https://rueconomics.ru/415541-usilenie-aviabazy-rf-v-gyumri-lishit-smysla-mechtu-gruzii-o-vstuplenii-v-nato>
- *National Interest*: Armenia's New Ballistic Missiles Will Shake Up the Neighborhood - <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/armenias-new-ballistic-missiles-will-shake-the-neighborhood-18026>

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

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From: Tavlarides, Mark <mtavlarides@bgrdc.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 2:50 PM
To: Tavlarides, Mark <mtavlarides@bgrdc.com>
Subject: Azerbaijan Update

Good afternoon,

Earlier this week, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) released its [2020 Annual Report](#). USCIRF noted the positive trend of religious freedom conditions in Azerbaijan, and USCIRF Commissioner Johnnie Moore explained why he believes Azerbaijan should not be included in the report:

"Azerbaijan does not meet the threshold necessary to be included in this report. As I have said before: it is a country where Sunni and Shi'a clerics pray together, where Evangelical and Russian Orthodox Christians serve together, and where thriving Jewish communities enjoy freedom and total security in their almost entirely Islamic country. It is a Muslim-majority country that has hosted prominent Hindu leaders and it is a Shi'a majority neighbor of Iran whose commitment to peace led it long ago to forge a vibrant, public, and diplomatic relationship with the state of Israel. Azerbaijan has had the challenge of bringing religious freedom into a post-Soviet legal framework, but— even in this—it has achieved much more than any of its neighbors. The religious freedom community would also be wise to not arbitrarily disregard the government's concerns about violent, religious extremism and its national security. Finally, I also join with religious leaders throughout the world in the prayer that one day soon the governments of Azerbaijan and Armenia will find a way to address the grievances and injustices between them in pursuit of true peace."

The full report can be found [here](#), and the section on Azerbaijan can be found [here](#). Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

Mark

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